

Message Text

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ORIGIN OES-06

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DOT-00 EB-07 EPA-01 ERDA-05 FMC-01 TRSE-00 H-02

INR-07 INT-05 IO-13 JUSE-00 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MEXICO PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 173569

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:PFOR, EFIS, PLOS, MX

SUBJECT: US/MEXICO FISHERIES NEGOTIATIONS

1. AS EMBASSY AWARE, AT CONCLUSION OF USG/GOM FISHERIES NEGOTIATIONS IN MAY TWO CRITICAL ISSUES REMAINED UNSETTLED. ONE WAS QUESTION OF U.S. FISHERY FOR SHRIMP WITHIN MEXICAN 200-MILE ZONE; GOM POSITION WAS THAT THIS FISHERY MUST TERMINATE IMMEDIATELY. OTHER WAS QUESTION OF HOW TO HANDLE FISHERY FOR TUNA WITHIN MEXICAN ZONE; GOM WAS UNDECIDED ON WHETHER OR NOT TO INSIST ON A LICENSING REQUIREMENT.

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2. WITH RESPECT TO SHRIMP ISSUE, DEPT. HAS SEEN NO EVIDENCE THAT GOM HAS CHANGED ITS POSITION TO ALLOW SOME ACCESS TO U.S. VESSELS ON A PHASE-DOWN BASIS, BUT DEPT. STILL IS EXPECTING SOME ACCOMMODATION ON THIS ISSUE FROM GOM DURING

JULY 19 NEGOTIATING SESSION. ALTERNATIVE OF NO ACCESS AT ALL WOULD LEAD TO GREAT DIFFICULTIES AND POSSIBLE INCIDENTS IN THE GULF, AND THERE WOULD BE SERIOUS CONGRESSIONAL AND INDUSTRY PRESSURES ON THE USG TO RESTRICT GOM SHRIMP IMPORTS, PRESENTLY VALUED AT APPROXIMATELY 250 MILLION DOLLARS ANNUALLY.

3. TUNA QUESTION IS PERHAPS EVEN MORE TROUBLESOME. U.S. POSITION IS THAT THE HIGHLY MIGRATORY TUNA SHOULD BE DEALT WITH THROUGH NEGOTIATION OF NEW MULTILATERAL TREATY IN

EASTERN PACIFIC TO REPLACE IATTC. MEXICO AGREES, AND HAS CALLED FOR SUCH MULTILATERAL NEGOTIATION TO TAKE PLACE IN MEXICO CITY IN NEAR FUTURE, BUT HAS INDICATED THAT LICENSING OF FOREIGN TUNA VESSELS INSIDE GOM ZONE MAY IN THE INTERIM BE NECESSARY. U.S. COULD AGREE TO SOMETHING SYMBOLIC, BUT A SUBSTANTIVE CONCESSION RE LICENSING INSIDE 200-MILES OUTSIDE THE FABRIC OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION IS NOT POSSIBLE UNDER TERMS OF U.S. LAW AND AT THIS TIME WOULD PREJUDICE FUTURE TUNA NEGOTIATIONS. DEPT. WAS HOPING THAT GOM MIGHT AGREE TO SET TUNA QUESTION ASIDE UNTIL IATTC RENEGOTIATION, AND DELEGATION DEPARTED MAY TALKS BELIEVING THERE WAS REASONABLY GOOD POSSIBILITY THIS WOULD BE GOM POSITION. RECENT NOTE FROM GOM RESPONDING TO U.S. NOTE OF MAY 24 REGARDING MEXICO'S 200-MILE CLAIM, HOWEVER, WOULD SEEM TO INDICATE THAT GOM WILL REQUIRE LICENSES FOR FISHING FOR HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES. IF THIS IS IN FACT SITUATION BEGINNING JULY 31, A CONFRONTATION INVOLVING SEIZURES BY GOM WHICH WOULD BRING INTO PLAY SANCTIONS CONTAINED IN VARIOUS U.S. LEGISLATION WOULD SEEM INEVITABLE.

4. DEPT. IS HOPEFUL THAT THESE DIFFICULT ISSUES WILL BE RESOLVED DURING NEXT NEGOTIATION AND THAT FISHERIES AGREEMENT BETWEEN USG AND GOM WILL BE REACHED. OTHER FISHERIES ISSUES BETWEEN US CAN BE SETTLED RATHER EASILY. HOWEVER, UNLESS GOM POSITION ON TUNA AND SHRIMP IS MORE CONFIDENTIAL

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FLEXIBLE THAN HAS BEEN INDICATED SO FAR, FISHERIES AGREEMENT WILL NOT BE POSSIBLE. IF IN EMBASSY'S JUDGEMENT IT WOULD BE WORTHWHILE, APPROACH TO UNDERSECRETARY CASTENADA MIGHT BE UNDERTAKEN BY EMBASSY TO EXPLORE POSSIBILITY OF MOVEMENT IN GOM POSITION. KISSINGER

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